

Introduced by Senator Speier

February 22, 2005

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 25— Relative to safety in employment.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 25, as introduced, Speier. Employer safety.

This measure would urge employers to ensure that their injury prevention programs and other systems for identifying and correcting workplace hazards, consider the effects of ultraviolet radiation and implement skin cancer prevention policies to protect outdoor workers.

The measure would also call upon the state, by no later than July 2006, to utilize existing means of communication with employers to advise employers of the importance of sun safety and skin cancer protections in the workplace.

Fiscal committee: yes.

- 1 WHEREAS, The chief cause of skin cancer is exposure to
- 2 ultraviolet rays (UV) from natural sunlight and artificial sources
- 3 and UV rays in sunlight cause 90 percent of all skin cancer; and
- 4 WHEREAS, According to the American Cancer Society, skin
- 5 cancer is the most common cancer in the United States; and
- 6 WHEREAS, One in five Americans will develop skin cancer
- 7 in his or her lifetime and one American every hour dies from the
- 8 disease; and
- 9 WHEREAS, Unprotected exposure to sunlight over time is
- 10 pathologic in some cases, as demonstrated by reputable sources
- 11 including the California Department of Health Services, the
- 12 United States Army Center for Health Promotion and Prevention
- 13 Medicine, the United States Centers for Disease Control and

1 Prevention, the United States Department of Health and Human
2 Services, the United States National Institutes of Health, the
3 United States Occupational Health and Safety Administration,
4 and the World Health Organization; and

5 WHEREAS, During April 2000, the United States Department
6 of Health and Human Services in its Ninth Report on
7 Carcinogens, classified solar radiation as a “known human
8 carcinogen” or cancer-causing agent; and

9 WHEREAS, Building on this declaration, the federal Office of
10 Safety and Health Administration, in July 2000, released formal
11 sun-safety protection guidelines for outdoor workers, which are
12 summarized in a pocket card entitled, “Projecting Yourself
13 Against Harmful Sunlight”; and

14 WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
15 the World Health Organization, and the California Department of
16 Health Services Skin Cancer Prevention Program have published
17 guidelines for sun safety and skin cancer prevention for outdoor
18 workers; and

19 WHEREAS, The Labor Code requires employers to establish
20 an effective system to identify and correct unsafe and unhealthy
21 work practices; and

22 WHEREAS, According to the Occupational Health and Safety
23 Administration created in the United States Department of Labor,
24 “unprotected employees working in sunlight risk exposure to UV
25 radiation, which can cause eye damage, premature aging of the
26 skin, and skin cancers, such as melanoma, the most serious type
27 of skin cancer, which accounts for more than seventy-five
28 percent (75%) of the deaths due to skin cancer”; and

29 WHEREAS, Skin cancer is highly preventable when specific
30 sun-safety behaviors such as the use of wide-brimmed hats,
31 UV-protective sunglasses, long clothing, and sunscreen are
32 adopted, supplemented by environmental supports such as the
33 provision of shade and the adoption and implementation of
34 sun-protection guidelines and policies; and

35 WHEREAS, Businesses, organizations, and individuals need
36 to understand why and how to guard against unprotected
37 exposure to sunlight; and

38 WHEREAS, Safety and health precautions add value to
39 business, the workplace, and human life; now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
2 *thereof concurring,* That employers are urged to ensure that their
3 injury prevention programs and other systems for identifying and
4 correcting workplace hazards consider the pathologic effects of
5 UV radiation and ensure, as appropriate, that skin cancer
6 prevention policies for outdoor workers are put into operation;
7 and be it further

8 *Resolved,* That, by no later than July 2006, the state, utilizing
9 existing means of communication with employers on workplace
10 safety issues, shall advise employers of the importance of sun
11 safety and skin cancer protections within workplace settings.